

***Draft***  
**California Air Resources Board**  
**Urban Vegetation Air Quality Information Program**  
**Program Concept Information Sheet**

Urban vegetation improves the quality of urban life with pleasant aesthetics, shade, landscape beauty, and other benefits. Further, vegetation chosen for urban planting in the backyards, streets, parks, and other areas can reduce adverse air quality impacts. However, some vegetation emits gases and particles that can adversely impact air quality. The objective of a voluntary urban vegetation air quality labeling program is to provide consumers with information so that air quality is another factor that can be considered when making vegetation purchasing decisions. This sheet presents information to facilitate the development of a voluntary program that communicates information on how to reduce air quality impacts to those who make planting decisions.

**Concept**

- A simple and easily accessible method of communicating vegetation air quality information.
- The program applies to urban areas and is entirely voluntary.
- A process needs to be developed that identifies trees that are low hydrocarbon emitters.
- Public education and outreach is an integral and important part of the program.
- Air quality information for inclusion in the program consists of hydrocarbon emissions and bioallergens associated with vegetation.
- A process needs to be developed that identifies harmful allergens released to the air by vegetation.
- Target recipients of the information are expected to be residential consumers, municipal governments, commercial designers and operators of large scale landscaping, and publishers of magazines and books on planting.
- The program may consider other environmental impacts of vegetation in the future.
- A phased program is envisioned where it is expected to consider additional attributes in the future.
- The program will be designed for periodic updates.
- The program will rely on existing information resources.

**Questions to Consider**

- What vegetation should be included?
- What resources should we turn to for information?
- What organizations should be consulted?
- What is the most effective way to provide information on the program?
- How can the effectiveness of the program be determined?

**Plan**

- Public consultation workshop in June 2002
- Advisory workgroup formation by June 2002
- Develop concept/program through August 2002
- Public workshops in October 2002
- Board hearing on the concept/program by end of 2002